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IN MEMORIAM

Simple, gentle, discerning, courageous, loving and hard-working *Bā* — Kasturba Gandhi, who died on 22nd February, 1944.

22-2-'50

GANDHI AND MARX

IV

I shall now state the basic principles of Marxism as I have understood them. In this connection, the reader will please excuse me if at any place I have made a confusion between Marx and Marxism, or later interpretations of the Marxian doctrine. For I do not write with a scholar's knowledge of the subject.

As stated previously Marx is a monobasist like Gandhiji and the Advaita Vedantins. But according to Marx the basic principle is inert Matter and not the Spirit or *Atma*. He holds that there is no evidence for believing that matter has its rise from, existence in, and return to an eternal substance called the Spirit and that without it the former could not exist. On the contrary, the observed facts of the universe and the history of evolution show that for millions and millions of years life did not exist upon our earth; that out of billions of heavenly bodies known to astronomers, it is doubtful if it exists in any form anywhere except on this earth. Science traces pretty accurately in what form life first appeared on this earth, how it evolved at different stages and got transformed into millions of types of living organisms, from the most simple cell to the hugest animal and tree, until, at last, man, its highest development in existence at present, appeared on the scene. On the basis of this study of science and history, one can safely assert that even when life was not, matter was; one cannot say with equal confidence that there was life when matter was not. Hence it is life which has its birth, sustenance and dissolution in matter and not vice versa. What is imagined to be the spirit or Soul, — that is, the capacity to cognize, think, feel, remember, etc., — is as much a development, arrangement and interaction of material forces as a complicated man-made mechanism, like a robot, or an air-plane which propels itself to an aimed target by a judicious combination of the several energies known to physicists and chemists. There is no more spirit in the one than in the other. From the smallest single cell to the most developed human being, ultimately it is all a congregation of matter and material energies, systematized and regimented to act in a particular manner. The thinking process is a type of record-making and record-reading produced by the interaction of a series of fine movements in the body. This is possible as long as the body machine is in order. If for any reason the body machine goes wrong it cannot do so, even as a radio set cannot produce any sound if it has got into disorder. There is no more departure of a soul or the spirit from the body when it breaks, than there is any departure of it from a radio set, when it is hopelessly spoilt. Violence and non-violence, righteousness and sin, truth and falsehood, morality and immorality are mere inhibitions and man-made taboos, and killing, torturing, cheating etc., have no more intrinsic spiritual significance than what is involved in the demolition of a natural hillock or the destruction or alteration of a man-made object. Objects are produced and maintained with a purpose and can be destroyed and altered for a purpose. The same principle applies whether they are animate or inanimate.

Since the time life took the form of man, this species has made a wonderful history of its own. A close study of the various stages of man's evolution indicates the main direction in which he and his social institutions will develop in the future. The progress and passage of man through certain definite phases is inevitable. There is a set order of such phases which it cannot escape from or leap over. Whether man willingly co-operates with nature or obstinately opposes it, the march of progress in a definite order is determined. This is called Determinism in Marxian philosophy. यदभावि न तद् भावि; भावि चेन्न तदन्यथा What is not to happen, shall not happen, and what is to happen is bound to happen. So, efforts to change the course of destiny are futile. The wise, therefore, should help the destiny to fulfil itself completely and speedily by their willing co-operative drive, so that the germ for the next phase of evolution might develop well. This faith in Determinism is a strong motive-power behind the activities of the Marxists. They believe that they help the course of nature, and thus fulfil its law.

The next marked phase for human society is, according to Marxism, the end of capitalism and the rise to power of the proletariat. The

latter is marked out by nature as the agency for accomplishing the overthrow and suppression of the capitalist system. And attempts to put obstructions in the course are doomed to failure.

Not until the dictatorship of the proletariat is fully established and has attained its full stature, will human society be classless and ready for enjoying peace, equality and freedom from war and violence. After Communism is established in the world, there will be no classes and class-conflicts, no private property in the means of production and no room for profiteering. Hence there will be no need for violence also, and so non-violence will come in a natural way. There will also be no need for complicated machinery of government, and the stage will have been set for the birth of the State of Ideal Anarchy, which Gandhiji, in common with other idealists, dreamt of.

Discerning men must exert to help Nature to fulfil itself. In Nature, it is only the end which counts, not the means. So the distinction between so-called fair and foul means is unphilosophical. The means must be examined only for their effectiveness for achieving the end in view. Those who resist the destined course of evolution, whether ignorantly, foolishly or selfishly, must be removed from the way.

This necessitates a revolution. A nation-wide general strike is the most potent weapon to accomplish revolution in a capitalistic economic order.

Religion and ethics are partly folly and partly deliberate means of confounding simple people. Under their camouflage are concealed weapons of exploiting the masses. They are opiates to dull the people's power to think and act for themselves, and an attractive outer skin to hide one's selfishness.

Gandhiji's emphasis on God and Religion helped the feudal and capitalist rulers, and his emphasis on non-violence and praise of ideal anarchy misdirected the people in the immediate task before them, namely the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Moreover, his philosophy of opposition to industrialism and return to the *charkha* and village industries was negation of progress and a reactionary rejection of the achievements of science. Since the world will not go back, Gandhiji was a failure himself and Gandhism is bound to fail.

Thus, according to Marxists, Gandhism is incompatible with Communism. It is also incomparable with it, because of its emphasis on non-violence, which is a distant stage, and its recognition of the irrational belief in God and Religion, — the shield of the feudal and capitalistic orders. The truth according to Marxist theory is : there can be neither a revolution nor a government, without resorting to violence ; and without revolution and the power of the State, Communism cannot be established. So Communism will have to be brought about by establishing a dictatorial State of the proletariat through a violent revolution.

I hope this will be accepted as a fair representation of the Marxist doctrine. The Gandhian position, *vis-a-vis* this, I shall try to elucidate next week.

Bombay, 23-2-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

GOVERNMENT AND MUNICIPAL SWEEPERS

[The following article by Shri Purushottamdas Solanki refers to an important and serious matter. There is no valid answer to it, and the pleas which are usually made for not acting promptly in the matter are based on considerations of its economic consequences on the middle class people. The Caste Hindus and the middle class people have neither the willingness nor the leisure to personally take part in scavenging and sanitary cleanliness of their surroundings. They, therefore, have only one course open to them, that is, of getting it done on wages. And resources of the middle class being limited, they follow the principle of first paying the bully and the strong, then of safeguarding the interests of their own class to the neglect of the lowest. Thus, primary school teachers and municipal sweepers are the worst victims of this policy.

Unless municipalities decide to collect their taxes from the people in the form of grain, cloth and personal labour, and not restrict themselves to accepting money only, and also to pay the remuneration of their staff partly in kind, I am afraid, this conflict resembling class-war will remain a permanent feature of society. — K.G.M.]

Every day brings fresh troubles and hardships to the municipal sweepers. Their utterly helpless condition to which they are reduced is shocking and a standing disgrace to both the Government and society. This problem is an old one. During the British regime, efforts to improve their lot met with little success, because the rulers were not sufficiently interested in the matter. The problem was shelved off with sympathetic assurances.

Thereafter Mahatma Gandhi and Shri Thakkarbapa came on the scene, and with the view of tackling the problem of Harijans from all sides founded the Harijan Sevak Sangh. It drew the attention of municipalities and other public bodies to the disgraceful conditions under which sweepers lived and carried on their occupation with little or no remuneration. Their efforts brought some relief, but still much remained to be done.

After the installation of popular ministries in 1937 the Bombay Government issued a circular recommending that the municipal sweepers should be treated as permanent employees and as such they should be granted all available privileges and facilities. The efforts of Harijan workers in the districts of Kheda and Ahmedabad met with some success. Some of the municipalities of these districts implemented the recommendations of the Government. But the main problem remains as untackled as ever.

The Government has shown commendable alertness and skill in solving many other difficult problems. But as far as this problem is concerned, they have adopted a policy of delay. It is said that the Local Self-Government Act stands in their way. But to me this plea appears

untenable; for if the Government could amend many other laws, they might as well do the same in this case. I firmly believe that if the Government willed it, there were a thousand and one ways to do it.

A majority of municipal members are devoid of progressive ideas. They seem to believe in the so-called theory of *karma*, that the present life of man is determined by his actions in the past birth, and accordingly, Harijans are born in communities which are ordained to rot in misery during their earthly life. It is, therefore, their duty to do their job under every hardship, and with or without remuneration. They cannot ask for the same treatment as is accorded to other people. One can easily imagine how far the circular of the Government can influence such minds.

With increased awakening in the municipal sweepers, their hardships have also increased. If they behave with their officers with self-respect, they become the victims of their wrath; and direct or indirect attempts are made to dispense with their services. The less we talk of the strikes and acceptance of demands of the worker the better. The tense atmosphere of intense disputes, which arise out of vanity sows bitter seeds for future conflicts. This is most harmful to workers and also adds to their hardships. Leave aside also the talk of starting co-operative societies. Municipalities which run co-operative societies think of closing them down or running them in a way not conducive to the interest of the workers.

No objection could be raised if municipalities took steps to ensure fair distribution of responsibility and regularity in work; but under the excuse of doing so, what they are now doing simply brings about moral degeneration of municipal workers and the sucking of their blood. This at least should stop. At their sweet will, on the pretext that the population is less than supposed, they reduce the number of workers or their wages and thus do incalculable harm to them. Where is justice in this? Is this the treatment meted out to those who have for years worked at the cost of their lives?

New sweepers are recruited after full consideration. But when they put forth their demands either for increase in wages or other facilities, they are looked upon as if they had committed a serious offence; and as such they are out to punish them, both with legal and extra-legal means. Government also shows indifference towards them. There is hardly any other task in which Government brooks so much delay.

'Give up sweeping work', 'Harijan's work is as sacred as that of a Brahman', Harijans are advised by well-meaning friends. I have no objection to agree with these views. I have been long attempting along with several other friends to persuade Harijans to give up their occupation and take up a better one. But this is not a task which could be achieved in a month or a year. It is a long-time programme. Such programmes are not carried out by merely speaking of them. The question is what should these people do until they can take to other callings? Is the work they do superfluous? Will the advice that it is sacred fill their hungry stomachs?

When this problem is discussed in municipalities, they talk of first creating public opinion on the question. It is said that the increase in taxation will be resented by the people. How many years will be required to cultivate public opinion of people who believe that it is their past actions which are responsible for their being born Harijans? And until public opinion is cultivated, should the municipal workers continue in the present condition? Did the Government wait for creating public opinion in enacting several social reform laws? And did they think of people's resentment against increase in taxation? And what are they doing even for cultivating public opinion?

The problem of Harijan sweepers in Government offices, police lines and other Government and semi-Government departments is also pending in the same way.

The Government have appointed a committee to find a permanent solution of the problems of municipal workers. The committee have started gathering facts and information for their study. Though the problem being an old one almost all data is on hand, the committee will work in the bureaucratic manner. I am afraid the committee will take a long time to study and report on the problem, and the Government will take its own time for studying the report when made, and if complications arise in the meanwhile, the report will be pigeon-holed, with the result that poor municipal workers will be reduced to a more and more miserable condition.

Under the circumstances, I do not find any other solution to the problem but making a legislation on the question. It brookes no delay.

Will the Government and its committee regard it their bounden duty to give justice to those who have for centuries rendered precious social service under innumerable hardships and at the cost of their lives for insignificant or no remuneration at all?

PURUSHOTTAMDAS JETHABHAI SOLANKI

(Translated from Gujarati)

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HARIJAN

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NARAYAN BOMB

There is a Marathi devotional couplet which means thus:

> "I sought Thy refuge, because I had heard that Thou purifiest the sinner. But now I am told that I must be free from sin *before* I can meet Thee. So I go back."

The couplet is said to have been sung by a repentant devotee who went to a famous shrine for offering worship, but was refused admission on the ground that there was some sin attached to him, and his entry would pollute the god of the temple. If God himself was subject to pollution, what hope may a sinner entertain of being delivered from sin?

Smaller and weaker nations of the world feel that U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. are two of the most powerful modern States of the world. They can help the world out of the mire and assure peace and happiness to every people in the world. They are held to be very alert and awake and technically advanced. They have, of course, different capacities for serving mankind. If both can work together, even as they did to win the last war, they can make this world blessed. So other nations as well as individuals look to the one or the other with faith and hope and for charity and inspiration.

But alas, how tragic their own mental condition is! Each lives in terrible fear of the other, and seeks to protect itself against the other by as terrible and fearful means. It is difficult to say whether the fearfulness of their bombs is greater or the intensity of their own fear. It is not clear how fear can inspire courage and sense of security in themselves as also in those who look to them for protection and aid. There is an old poem which says,

> "A mendicant approached a king for alms. The king was engaged in prayer. The mendicant heard the king say, 'Oh Lord, augment my kingdom and increase my riches, make me more powerful than my neighbouring ruler.' The mendicant thereupon turned back without making the supplication. The king noticed this and sent a messenger to call him back. He asked the beggar the reason for his going back without waiting for alms. The mendicant said that he found that he had approached him (the king) under a misapprehension. He had not realized that he was asking alms of another beggar like himself! On discovering the mistake, he had turned back."

This might look pedantry, pleasant enough to be told in a club of literary wits, but of no value in serious politics. But I humbly implore shrewd statesmen of the world to look at realities in the simple way of a child and not as ingenious diplomats. Can the atomic, the superatomic, the hydrogenic, or the bacteriological bombs, cosmic rays and similar weapons of destruction *protect* and *save* humanity?

Let me refer to one more story from old literature. The war of the *Mahabharata* is full of descriptions of fearful weapons. One of them was the *Narayan Astra*. It is described as one against which there was no effective counter-weapon. The only way a person could save himself against it was, it is narrated, to throw down on earth every weapon he possessed, and sit or stand motionless wherever he might be at the moment. There was only one Narayan bomb in existence at the time, and the Kauravas possessed it. They used it against the Pandavas. Krishna immediately issued instructions to the army to throw down all their weapons and remain motionless in their places. Every one obeyed, except the proud Bhima. He began to wield his weapons frantically with the result that they flew against himself. Ultimately under Krishna's peremptory orders he obeyed, with the result that the Narayan bomb became nullified.

The story may be purely imaginary. But the moral is clear. The only protection against terrible weapons of war is to courageously disarm oneself. The suicidal race of armaments and hunt for mightier and still mightier weapons cannot prevent war and bring peace and prosperity to any country. Even rich America will become a pauper country in the attempt.

What applies to America, applies with still greater force to India and Pakistan. Let both countries seek wisdom. This mutual fear and militarization against each other cannot benefit any. Let us not repeat the folly of our forebears of the time of the East India Company. The East India Company is dead, but has left plenty of heirs, even as our forefathers have done. The foreign capital and foreign experts are but modern editions of the old. Let it be remembered that even with all their ill-will neither India nor Pakistan can crush the other out of existence. But with mutual goodwill, they can together make both regions happy and prosperous.

The only strong weapon is to dare to stand unarmed. But if it is too difficult to take the extreme step, there are easier stages of doing this. There can be unilateral resolution not to use aggressive weapons of greater intensity than a particular level. Thus one can resolve that, come what may, even in case of war, it will not resort to aerial bombing; it will not fight through air-planes; then in the next stage it may resolve not to use machine guns, not to resort to firing against people not in possession of bombs, guns etc., and so on, until all fighting by States against States or between States and the people is renounced.

Bombay, 15-2-'50 **K. G. MASHRUWALA**

NOTES

Shrimati Varutai Dastane

Shri V. V. Dastane is a well-known worker of Maharashtra. Not so his wife, Shrimati Varutai Dastane, who breathed her last in the Kasturba Hospital at Sevagram early last month (January). But that does not mean that her contribution to the service of the nation was less than her husband's. In fact she had to perform several duties simultaneously; as the wife of a husband who suddenly gave up a lucrative practice without having saved much and brought too many guests; as the mother of three daughters and a son to be brought up and educated in a manner befitting a middle class educated Brahman and as a co-sharer in public service.

"When the Ashram was founded at Wardha," writes Vinobaji, "Shri Jamnalal Bajaj and Shri Dastane resolved to educate their children at the Ashram. Shrimati Varutai herself accompanied her children and laid the foundation of the present Mahilashram. (She was its superintendent for a long time). But those who did not know her from near will not sufficiently know the intensity of her spirit of service."

Shri S. U. Patel

Shri Shivabhai Umedbhai Patel of Vijapur (North Gujarat), who died of sudden heart failure at the age of 78, while he was returning home from his usual morning "walk to the fields" in the intense cold of the last week, was not a worker in the usual sense, but was a devoted believer in the message of the *charkha*, ever since it was given to the world by Gandhiji. He had good health for his age and it would not be surprising, he and his friends thought, if he lived up to 90. But would he have the strength to ply the *charkha* till 90? He apprehended that he may not have that strength after 80; so he resolved to spin yarn sufficient to last him for 10 years so that he might always be able to wear only self-spun *khadi*. When he died, he had already made *khadi* sufficient to last him for six years more, over and above what he gave to his son and friends. He spun for nearly 5 hours a day.

Shri Sarat Bose

As I was writing the above, I received the information of the sudden demise of the great leader Shri Sarat Chandra Bose. A great and brilliant leader himself, his devotion to his greater brother, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, was even more remarkable. Perhaps he was the first to put faith in him, and he stood by him and was prepared to run any risks for his sake even if the whole world had abandoned him. To me this seemed to be his greatest virtue, and made me always regard him with great esteem. My respects to his memory.

Bombay, 21-2-'50

Application or Selection?

Referring to the article *Ideal Representatives* (Feb. 5), Shri Hridaynarayan Chaudhari desires to point out that in saying that selfless Gandhian workers "must not expect Congress leaders or office bearers to invite them of their own accord", he did not suggest that they would not be invited because of their selflessness, integrity and devotion to ideals. He meant simply to convey that it was not to be expected that Selection Committees would themselves approach or persuade suitable candidates to stand for elections. Like other candidates, Gandhian workers also should make regular applications, and if they did so, he was hopeful that they would be preferred to others.

While I publish his explanation, let me say that it is not altogether unusual for Parliamentary Boards to request, even press, a person whom they considered particularly required and, if necessary, even to bring influence upon him through a leader, a word from whom he would not disregard, to make him consent.

I am rather of opinion that no applications should be invited from candidates themselves. The Selection Committees should themselves approach suitable people and if they consent, put them forth. This is the least which can be done even under the present system. Even this system will not always be satisfactory; but it will at least stop that ugly march by every applicant to the Central Parliamentary Committee to press his claim to be accepted in preference to others. Since only one out of several applicants can be selected, this results in antagonizing all who, in their own opinion, have been rejected very unfairly.

Bombay, 22-2-'50

"Gathas of Zarthushtra"

I am not a scholar of ancient languages and as such have no qualification to take notice of *New Light on the Gathas of Holy Zarthushtra* by the well-known Gujarati poet Shri Ardeshir Khabardar. But even a cursory perusal of that large volume of 850 pages of large size is sufficient to convince one of the amount of diligent and patient research labour spent upon it. When one remembers that for some years Shri Khabardar is almost invalid and financially hard pressed, this production of his fills one with great respect. The publication consists of, what are known in the Gatha Literature, *Yasna* (Sans. *Yajna*, hymns) 28 to 34, in the original language of the Gatha (in Gujarati and specially devised Roman scripts), a word to word rendering thereof in Vedic Sanskrit, and their translations in English and Gujarati, the latter both in ordinary prose and lyric poetry. The Vedic rendition is Shri Khabardar's original contribution. In doing so he claims to have discovered the key to the exact pronunciation of Vedic words in accordance with their *udatta*, *anudatta* and *svarita* accents, the true knowledge whereof, he says,

was lost by India more than 3,000 years ago. He claims that the Gatha script and its correct pronunciation preserved till date by Parsi reciters of the Gatha, if translated in the Nagari script in accordance with rules discovered by him, would show at once why a particular sign of Vedic accent would have to be used along with it, and how exactly the word should be pronounced. It is for scholars to examine this claim. But if established, it will undoubtedly throw new light on both the Gatha and the Vedas.

The book is priced at Rs. 20. Though almost entirely in Gujarati, I understand that it has been well appreciated and patronized by foreign scholars. It is regrettable that Gujarati scholars do not seem to have paid much attention to the work. It would be a pity if there are no Gujarati scholars, competent enough to evaluate such scholarship.

Bombay, 15-2-'50 K. G. M.

Untouchability in Rural Areas

Shri Shyamlal, working Secretary, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund, in the course of a letter says:

> "Our present Republican Constitution has abolished untouchability in all spheres and forms. However, during our recent Andhra tour, we were very much pained to find untouchability persisting with all its idea of high and low. In our (Kasturba) centres, if Harijan children come, caste Hindus would boycott them and if caste Hindus children come, Harijan children out of fear dare not come.
>
> "We in the Harijan Sevak Sangh tackled the problem of untouchability in towns and taluka places but not in rural areas. The devil of untouchability is still there. Unless the caste system goes root and branch there is no hope of social equality, but adult franchise has been responsible in entrenching the caste system all the more as a political unit."

I thoroughly agree with him in believing that the demon of untouchability is still rampant in all our rural areas — which means in not less than 80 per cent of the country. We have not worked enough in the villages yet. With only a period of 10 years — 1950 to 1960 — before us as per the new Constitution, I am wondering if we will be able to achieve our goal unless a miracle happens.

If adult franchise entrenches the upper class people more strongly in their superiority, I do not know if a few reserved seats given to Harijans for ten years only will create a revolution in the minds of our conservative people. May God give us better sense of equality, fraternity and liberty.

A. V. THAKKAR

[I feel that social workers must work with sufficient intensity and zeal to assure Thakkarbapa that the desired revolution will have been achieved ere 1960. — K. G. M.]

Postal Rates

Now that the budget for 1950-51 is impending, it is opportune to reconsider the postal rates. As the places served by air mail are very few, the "all-up" air mail service has very little significance. In so far as the present rate of 2 annas per letter is justified on the ground that it covers despatch by air, it amounts to penalizing, if not worse, of people whose mails are sent by surface. In any event since all mails cannot be sent to all places by air, the postal customers should be given the choice as to which of their mails should be sent by air and which by surface, and pay according to the service. It is, therefore, suggested that the charge per letter be one-anna by surface, and one-anna and six pies by air. The postage on post-cards may be half-anna by surface, and three-quarter-anna by air.

Bangalore 4 P. KODANDA RAO

Newspapers to Assam

The Editor's attention was drawn by subscribers residing in Assam, that it took more than ten days for *Harijan* to reach to them, from Ahmedabad, and desired him to see if any improvement could be made in the matter. He referred the matter to the Minister of Communications with a request to think over it. This is the outcome, as conveyed to him by the Senior Deputy Director-General of Posts and Telegraphs:

> "It has been decided that with immediate effect newspapers will be carried by air between Calcutta and Assam with an additional surcharge of quarter anna for every 2½ Tolas. These newspapers will travel by surface route up to Calcutta and will be given air transmission from there onwards. In addition to this, facility already exists according to which newspapers can be sent by air throughout all over India with an air surcharge at the rate of one anna per tola. A press note on the subject is being issued separately."

Accordingly subscribers of *Harijan*, *Harijansevak*, or *Harijanbandhu* in Assam can get their paper early, if they will pay an additional charge of One Rupee per annum.

J. D. DESAI
Manager

Nai Talim Conference

The sixth All India Basic Education Conference will be held on April 8, 9 and 10, 1950, at Angul, Dist. Dhenkanal, Orissa. The special feature of this year's Conference will be that it is being organized not as an educational conference only, but as an integral part of the Sarvodaya Sammelan (All India Conference of Constructive Workers) to be held at Angul (Orissa) from the 6th to the 13th of April, 1950. Problems of National education, therefore, will be discussed against the wider background of the constructive programmes as a whole.

The discussions of the Educational Conference will centre round the problems connected with the five main stages of 'Nai Talim' or New Education, namely, Pre-Basic Education (for children below the age of 7 years), Basic

Education (of boys and girls of 7 to 15 years), Post-Basic or Adolescent Education, University Education and Research work, and Social or Adult Education.

Besides general discussions it is also expected that the delegates to the Conference will discuss in small groups special problems of Basic Education, such as the training of teachers, the technique of correlated teaching, the technique of craft teaching, the teaching of special subjects such as art, music etc., techniques and standards of assessment in Basic Education, preparation of literature, etc. An attempt will be made to make the programme of the Conference elastic so as to afford full opportunities for these discussions.

An Educational Exhibition will also be organized as a part of the Conference.

For further information, please write to: E. W. Aryanayakam, Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram, (Wardha)

FALSE ACCUSATIONS

Some of our patriots think that any official function which militates against their sense of propriety and duty towards the nation, was first introduced by the British in our very virtuous and faultless people. Thus a village worker whose sensitive mind, could not maintain equanimity at the extravagance at the official banquets given on 26th January, writes that even the republican Government had continued the evil custom " introduced by the British in pursuance of their divide and rule policy ! " Now, this is an altogether false accusation of the British people, whatever other sins they might have been guilty of as rulers. We Hindu and Muslims and our Indian rulers have always been efficient organizers of grand darbars, processions, feasts, drinks, dances and similar luxuries, even if we lacked efficiency in our military and civil organization. Poor Britain had not even the means of doing all these things on a scale, which could be compared with that of the Moghals, the Marathas and other Indian rulers. And side by side with their own feasts, it was also usual to feast the poor and by throwing handfuls of coins etc. among crowds distribute alms on such occasion. Of course, it was nothing in quality and quantity before that enjoyed by courtiers, and it necessarily violated the self-respect of the poor.

This feast making and charity-feeding are both in keeping with the habits of the whole nation. We do this not only on the occasion of marriage or birth, but even for celebrating deaths of dear ones and within a fortnight of their death! And we do so not only when there is peace and plenty in the country, but even when there is famine and war at the gate. The Peshwa was feasting brahmins when the enemy troops were marching on the city during the 1857 rising and there were only one or two wise men, who understood the gravity of the situation. Unthoughtfulness and heartlessness are not qualities in which Hindus and Muslims are deficient.

It is of course drossness in culture, but let it be confessed that it is our own weakness. If, at all, the British really took it from us partly because of its attractiveness and partly under the belief that that was the only way of establishing their prestige and maintaining their dignity among Indians.

As the above was being typed, I received another letter, in which the correspondent says, " Worship of money, which was introduced in our land by the British *Banias*, is the root of all evil." This too is an extravagant and untrue charge. No section or community except the poorest one of our country, has ever been deficient in the worship of money. Our Kings, courtiers, ministers, generals, as well as merchants have worshipped *Lakshmi* more intensely than they have done God, country, good morals or honesty. They have more than once played traitors to their masters and the State, and acted as middlemen between the British and the masses. Perhaps we developed that art further under British guidance. But our own proficiency was already high enough. We cannot improve if we throw the blame for all our drawbacks upon the British.

Bombay, 6-2-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

REFORM IN JAUNSAR

A hurried trip to northern India took me last summer to the hill station of Chakrata in the District of Dehra Dun. This region is a hill-tract of the Himalayas lying between Mussoorie and Simla and between the Jamna and Tons rivers with an area of about 400 square miles and a population of less than 60,000 souls consisting mostly of Brahmans, Thakurs and Kolta *adivasis*. The last are like serfs attached to the first two.

The hills begin with Kalsi across the Jamna, about 30 miles from Dehra Dun. Kalsi is famous for one of the most complete of Emperor Ashok's ancient Rock Edicts. A winding motor road takes the traveller 25 miles further to Chakrata Cantonment, a cool hill station 7,000 feet above sea level studded with bungalows, barracks, hotels, bazars and with a marvellous view of snow ranges.

Villages are numerous in the hills all around. The population is far too backward having a very very low percentage of education or literacy. Having been made a partially excluded area under the British administration, drinking and liquor distillation is unrestricted.

However, a very uncommon social custom, and one disapproved by higher civilizations, is polyandry. Unlike in any other part of India it is universal here. The main reason offered locally is that land being scant and unyielding in these hills, families must needs remain undivided and this can best be achieved under the system of polyandry. For as a rule a common wife or wives are among brothers of a single family unit only. It must also be noted that these people come into constant contact with

Tibet which lies just behind the snow ranges at their back and where polyandry is universal from times immemorial.

The system does not seem to have brought in its wake any discernable evil effects for society for centuries. The family unit functioned smoothly and harmoniously. There were no jealousies and no family feuds. But since the advent of the British, and during recent decades particularly with the growth of communications, cantonments, forests and trade, hordes of people from Indian planes invaded these mountain tracts and the queer social system of the locality was exposed to all manner of liberties at the hands of the new comers who took undue advantage of an unsophisticated people's code of morals.

The results have been disastrous. Over 80 per cent of the inhabitants of these villages are said to suffer from venereal diseases. Traffic in girls from this and the adjoining district has steadily grown and girls from villages now openly go out for the houses of ill-fame in Indian cities like Delhi, Kanpur, Allahabad, Calcutta or Bombay often without much protest from parents and elders.

The light of education being scant, the zeal for reform was at the lowest tide. But the phenomenal awakening among the youth all over the country during the last 8 or 10 years penetrated these mountain recesses too, and there have been vigorous efforts among Jaunsari youths to put up a dogged fight against social evils among their people.

Shri Dharmadev Shastri of Ashok Ashram, Kalsi, has been the pioneer social worker in this area, who is responsible for the present earnestness and fervour among the student world and among youths generally. Though not a Jaunsari himself, he gave up a comfortable teacher's job at Dehra Dun Kanya Gurukul about 8 years ago and took up his abode with family among the backward folks of Jaunsar villages near Kalsi where he built up a centre of social service. From here radiated rays of light and hope which infused a new spirit among the youth. It impelled them to go out for the service of their people. With their help Shri Shastri founded little village schools and industries and tiny dispensaries and *khadi* centres which in their turn became centres for imparting a new culture and for broadcasting a new gospel of cheer and hope among the toiling folks.

They have been working against tremendous odds these eight years; against official opposition, apathy or indifference, against the opposition and machinations of vested interests, even against personal insults, assaults and what not. I had opportunities to attend the deliberations of one or two of their village councils where local disputes were settled by arbitration and I could see the healing effect of their influence and their persuasions.

I had also the privilege of attending one of their youth conferences and to listen to the speeches of earnest youngmen, who had succeeded in persuading a number of elders of the community to attend their conference. In an atmosphere surcharged with suppressed emotion and feeling, speaker after speaker rose. Choked and overcome with a sense of intense humiliation and pain, such as I never remember to have witnessed anywhere else in my life, they beseeched their parents and elders, their pretty little sisters sitting in front rows with faces beaming with intelligence and devouring avidly every word of their brothers' speeches. Every speaker pleaded the cause of prompt wholesale reform, pleaded against polyandry, against traffic in the daughters of their race, against their tainted incomes, against the drink evil, against their treatment of their serfs, — the Kolta Harijans. They pleaded against the prevailing mass ignorance, against their exploitation, against a dozen other allied evils. The little girls applauded constantly. Their brothers were their heroes.

Here is food for earnest thoughtful reformers. Shri Shastri and his colleagues have acquitted themselevs well in their pioneer work of bringing about the awakening and creating an atmosphere. If our leaders and workers and Governments have done well in tackling a number of post-partition problems relating to millions of displaced persons of our divided land, a few of them would do equally well to tackle a tiny number of their country's daughters and their parents who are displaced in the moral sense.

At Chakrata Cantonment I saw scores of well laid spacious mansions formerly used by British troops now vacated and lying unused. A single one out of these can easily be converted into a Home or *A'shram* and placed under an organization like the Kasturba Trust for housing reclaimed girls and for women workers, for propagating reform among Jaunsari women and for weaning girls from the path of social evil. I venture to draw the attention of the Government and of our eminent social workers like Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru, Shrimati Sucheta Kripalani and Behn Mridula Sarabhai to this spot of evil on the social map of our motherland.

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GANDHI ANNIVERSARY DAY AT NAGPUR

[Gandhiji's Anniversary Day on January 30, 1950, was celebrated in various parts of India in a suitable manner. But the dignified manner and scale of its celebration at Nagpur under the guidance and inspiration of Shri Tukdoji Maharaj seems to have no parallel.

Shri Tukdoji Maharaj is a Maharashtri devotee of Madhya Pradesh who continues the tradition of popular saints like Jnaneshwar, Namdev, Tukaram and others. Berar has the credit of maintaining an unbroken line of such devotees, though, naturally, all have not attained equal success and fame. Some years ago Gadge Buva was in the limelight. Even today he is busy with his work, but he has grown old. Shri Tukdoji Maharaj is a new entry into the field and has already attained eminence, and is growing day by day. He is a good singer, is a Marathi and Hindi poet, an effective preacher and an able organizer. He is still young and came into close contact with Gandhiji at Sevagram. Generally he loves to sing his own compositions and draws thousands of village-folk from remote country sides who sit till late hours of the night to listen to his music and sermons.

Shri Tukdoji has set up an institution called Gurudev Seva Mandal in his village in Berar. But branches have been established in various centres of Madhya Pradesh, where he has volunteers specially trained by himself for organizing chiefly mass prayers, physical exercise, village cleanliness and spinning. Gandhi cap of a red-ochre colour is their distinguishing badge. Incidentally Shri Tukdoji Maharaj gives impetus to other items of the constructive programme also. He has transcended the barriers of caste and creed. He knew through his own experience the afflictions of the starving and down-trodden rural humanity. In his early age, he had loafed about in the company of ascetics, mendicants and *fakirs*, and played with Muslims and so-called 'low-caste' children of the villages. He is, therefore, free from any vanity of blood or station. Of course, his own faith and form of worship are based on the old Hindu tradition. His disciples belong both to the poorest and the well-to-do classes. He is simple enough to feel equally at home with children, boisterous youth and grave elders, and is able to meet every one at his own level. His serious deportment at the time of prayer is catching. He is frank enough to confess his shortcomings.

He was extremely agitated by the assassination of Gandhiji. The elegy which he composed at that time has become popular and those who are in the habit of listening to the radio regularly might have heard it. Since this melacholy episode he has been devoting greater attention to the spread of Gandhiji's message. He took special interest in organizing the celebrations of January 30 and February 12 in the year 1949 at the chief centre of his activity in the District of Amravati. This year the venue of the programme of January 30 was fixed at Nagpur. Below are extracts from the report regarding this function sent by Shri Kanu Gandhi. —K. G. M.]

Gurudev Seva Mandal conducts various kinds of activities, but its main emphasis is on the following:

1. Congregational Prayer;
2. spinning; also weaving to some extent;
3. physical culture: through athletic exercises and mass-drill;
4. women's training: through knitting and embroidery etc.;
5. medical aid: through Ayurvedic dispensaries in villages.

His volunteers train village people to sing songs and hymns. The language of the songs is simple and deals with themes like devotion to God, constructive programme, liquidation of untouchability, communal unity, etc. Several villages take advantage of medical relief and congregational prayer organized by this Mandal. Where it is not possible to meet for prayer daily it is held on Thursdays. Those who participate in prayers and group activities are expected to strictly observe certain rules of discipline. For instance, they have to maintain a particular posture, a particular distance from one another and so on. The people are attracted to the movement both on account of the atmosphere it spreads and the discipline it inculcates.

Shri Tukdoji has demonstrated that if we mix freely with the rural or urban people and win their hearts through service, it is possible to get a hearty response from them.

It was difficult to procure a ready *maidan* in Nagpur such as could accommodate a *lakh* or more people in an orderly manner. There was an open ground at a distance of a mile and a quarter from the railway station. The public used it as an open day-time public lavatory. It was difficult for women to pass that way. The ground was uneven and rugged. The Municipality tried to persuade Shri Tukdoji Maharaj not to select such a repelling spot full of night-soil, but to no purpose. He said that to shirk dirt and nuisance would be contrary to Gandhiji's ideology. Bapuji himself used to select such filthy discarded places and convert them into clean and level grounds to carry out his programmes. So Shri Tukdoji stuck to his resolve, as being in tune with Bapuji's teaching.

The Maharaj's stand was much appreciated by the Municipality which not only got the ground cleared of all rubbish, but also helped him with its resources to make a new arrangement of latrines for the public.

It is worth noting how Shri Tukdoji sought co-operation of persons from different walks of life to make the programme a success. A sum of about one *lakh* of rupees should be ready at hand before one dreams of collecting, lodging and feeding more than a hundred thousand persons under a single pandal these days. But this formidable task was achieved without any centrally collected fund.

Shri Tukdoji Maharaj initiated the materialization of his programme with the announcement of his scheme. He then organized different groups, each one being made responsible for carrying out of a specific task. These tasks comprised of the pooling of food material, the electrification of the ground, the erection and decoration of the pavilion and the installation of loud-speakers. In order to fulfil the duties allocated to each group, each member of the group was expected to contribute his share in the form of either money or material. The Maharaj expressed his willingness to make payments to the labour engaged by those in charge of electrification and loud-speakers.

There are a number of gymnasiums (*akhadas*) scattered all over the city of Nagpur. The differences existing between them were composed and unity was effected long ago. Now the substantial work began. The members of Gurudev Seva Mandal volunteered themselves to the morning job of scavenging the streets of the city for some days. Cleanliness spread all around. Subsequently mass prayers were held in each cleaned *mohalla*. The Maharaj made a point to be personally present during the prayer time and discuss the programme of the Anniversary Day.

At least some funds were necessary for the execution of such a large-scale project. Hence every street of the city was entrusted with the responsibility of collecting some donations from persons residing within its boundary.

Two or three kitchens were organized. Passes were given to those whom it was necessary to feed at those kitchens.

The way the pavilion was constructed and tents were pitched spoke highly of his organizing genius. Every minute detail was thought out and provided for. For instance, we hardly find suitable arrangement for drying wet clothes on the occasions of such mammoth gatherings. Hence, the people spread their clothes helter-skelter. But here we found special bamboo structures erected to hang wet garments on until dry. This cost

very little. The whole net-work of bamboos was made artistic and pleasing to the eye. Belts of cloth with selected phrases painted on them covered and decorated the upper parts of the structures. There were also bamboo shelves specially prepared for keeping sandals and shoes. They were numbered. When a pair of sandals or shoes was entrusted to the volunteer, the owner was given a card bearing a particular number. One got one's articles returned on presenting the card.

In the morning of January 30, as soon as the Flag-Salutation ceremony was over, a huge procession chanting the name of *Rama* walked along the main thoroughfare of Nagpur. About a *lakh* of persons participated in it.

At mid-day, Acharya Kripalani addressed the public. Then was to follow the forty-five minutes' programme of spinning on *charkhas* or *taklies* by about two thousand spinners, all seated in due order; but for want of time this programme could not last for more than twenty minutes. The next day therefore, the morning time was dedicated to spinning for three-fourths of an hour by way of atonement.

At night representatives of different religions of the world addressed the gathering.

There was also a mass luncheon organized in the noon. Every person desirous of taking part in it was greeted with welcome, but he had to bring his own home-prepared victuals. In this way the outsiders partook of the joy of eating together. There was an enormous pile of eatables. What was cooked in two or three kitchens run by the Mandal was in addition to the above stock. The total of the participants rose to twenty thousand. Nevertheless every thing was orderly and all were made to sit in regular rows. No deafening noises disturbed the peace of the place. The volunteers served dishes very promptly. The Maharaj stimulated their enthusiasm by his own exuberant movements.

At 3 p.m., there was a display of athletics and drill. Little boys and girls from different schools of Nagpur showed mass drill. Even the grown-ups performed various physical feats. The Gurudev Seva Mandal also presented its own programme of gymnastics and drill. The number of spectators increased beyond capacity. It was not possible for every one to witness the show. And the crowd became rather unmanageable.

Shri Tukdoji Maharaj entertained the public at night with his *bhajans*. It was a large gathering, and included both men and women. This programme went on from 9 to 10-45 p.m. The people were not much satisfied with it as the loud-speakers refused to work satisfactorily. The same programme of *kirtan* was, therefore, presented on the 1st of February.

Young men and women volunteered their services and enthusiastically helped the three-day programme to reach its successful culmination. They were divided into batches, each one responsible for the carrying out of a certain job. With the first flash of the dawn each batch engaged itself in the work that was allotted to it.

Precision, punctuality and discipline dominated the whole atmosphere. Prayers formed the most impressive feature of the programme. During morning meditations each *sadhak* sat keeping equal distance from his neighbours and at eventide the mass prayer was conducted. In the tranquil hours of the morning the solemn tunes of prayer were quieting and lulling. Who may doubt the efficacy of such prayers and who can escape their magic and influence?

The picture will not be complete without the mention of a small exhibition which was held there. The medicines brought from the dispensary run by the Gurudev Seva Mandal, the pieces of embroidery provided by the Mahila Mandal, an indigenous mill, the Magan Chula (oven), the charts of information regarding manure and night-soil and practical experiments constituted some of the exhibits. The articles lent by the Government Agriculture Department and the handicraft-articles obtained from the School for the Blind added to the above collections.

On behalf of the Charkha Sangh the whole process of *khadi* manufacture right from cotton to weaving was displayed from the point of view of self-sufficiency. The various processes of ginning, carding, spinning and weaving were exhibited. The general response of the visitors to the exhibits was one of surprise. Some were animated with the curiosity to know more.

Shri Tukdoji Maharaj was able to secure the co-operation of all and sundry from Nagpur in successfully celebrating the Anniversary Day. He rightly said: "The whole programme of the Anniversary Day of our Bapuji, the Father of the Nation, successfully executed is not a one-man show. The people of Nagpur are at its back. Without their support, nothing could have been achieved. Hence, it will be far from truth if a particular institution boasts of being the sole author of the programme. Every one who bears devotion to Gandhiji and who contributed to the success of the function can claim to be a partner in it."

Wardha, 2-2-'50 KANU GANDHI

(Translated from Gujarati)

GUIDING THOUGHTS FOR SATYAGRAHA UNITS

(In Words of Mahatma Gandhi)

[Mr. A. J. Muste, one of the members of the International Liaison Committee formed at the World Pacifists Meeting at Sevagram, and a leading Pacifist worker of U.S.A., has drafted a *Manifesto or Programme for Satyagraha Units* for consideration by Pacifists. The following quotations from Gandhiji form the guiding principles for members of such units. — K. G. M.]

"I must continue to argue until I convert opponents or own defeat. For my mission is to convert every Indian whether he is a Hindu, Muslim or any other, even Englishmen and finally the world, to non-violence for regulating mutual relations whether political, economic, social or religious. If I am accused of being too ambitious, I should plead guilty. If I am told that my dream can never materialize, I would answer 'that is possible' and go my way. I am a seasoned soldier of non-violence and I have evidence enough to sustain my faith. Whether, therefore, I have one comrade or more or none, I must continue the experiment."— *Harijan*, January 13, 1940

"I do not believe that the spiritual law works in a field of its own. On the contrary, it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. It thus affects the economic, the social and political fields."— *Young India*, September 9, 1925

"If the Abyssinians had adopted the non-violence of the strong, i. e. the non-violence which breaks to pieces but never bends, Mussolini would have had no interest in Abyssinia ... Of course, it is open to any one to say that human nature has not been known to rise to such a height. But if we have made unexpected progress in physical sciences, why may we do less in the science of the soul?" — *Harijan*, May 14, 1938

"If we are to make progress, we must not repeat history but make new history. We must add to the inheritance left by our ancestors. If we make new discoveries and inventions in the phenomenal world, must we declare our

bankruptcy in the spiritual domain? Is it impossible to multiply the exceptions so as to make them the rule ?"— *Young India*, May 6, 1926

"*Satyagraha* as conceived by me is a science in the making......We have to make truth and non-violence not matters for mere individual practice but for practice by groups, communities and nations. That at any rate is my dream. I shall live and die trying to realize it."— *Harijan*, September 24, 1938 and March 2, 1940

"Though I have failed with the Working Committee (of the Indian National Congress) in persuading them, at this supreme moment to declare their undying faith in non-violence as the only sovereign remedy for saving mankind from destruction, I have not lost the hope that the masses will refuse to bow before the Moloch of war but will rely upon their capacity for suffering to save the country's honour."— *Harijan*, September 30, 1939

"Submission to a State law wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty.. ... Thus considered civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil State."— *Young India*, November 10, 1921

"A call may come which one dare not neglect, cost what it may, I can clearly see the time coming to me when I *must* refuse obedience to every State-made law, even though there may be certainty of bloodshed. When neglect of the call means a denial of God, civil disobedience becomes a peremptory duty." — *Young India*, August 4, 1921

"The risk of remaining supine in the face of the greatest world conflagration in history is infinitely greater. If non-violence is the greater force in the world, it must prove itself during the crisis." — Gandhi's *Correspondence with the Government, 1942-44*

"When in the face of an upheaval such as we are witnessing, there are only a few individuals of immovable faith, they have to live up to their faith even though they may produce no visible effect upon the course of events. They should believe that their action will produce tangible results in due course." — *Harijan*, March 15, 1942

"A perfect passive resister has to be almost, if not entirely, a perfect man. We cannot all suddenly become such men, but if my proposition is correct — as I know it to be correct — the greater the spirit of passive resistance in us, the better men we will become. Its use, therefore, is, I think, indisputable, and it is a force which if it become universal, would revolutionize social ideas and do away with despotisms and the ever growing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning and are being almost crushed to death — that militarism which promises to overwhelm even the nations of the East." — *Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi.*

NATURE-CURE CLINIC, URULIKANCHAN

Readers might be aware of the Nature-Cure Clinic at Urulikanchan (Poona) founded by Gandhiji, during the last years of his life. It started functioning from April 1949 under the guidance of Dr. Dinsha Mehta. It was taken advantage of by a few middle-class patients. The Nature-Cure technique determined in the light of Dr. Dinsha Mehta's guidance proved efficacious to many of them. But, under it, the average monthly expense of each patient came approximately to Rs. 150 and the treatment lasted for about three to six months. This was felt to be rather heavy and prohibitive for men with very limited means. Hence, the Clinic failed to be of wider use to the general public. There was provision for 20 patients, but the number hardly rose to as much as eight. It was felt that though the Nature-Cure method was effective, there was not much possibility of its being propagated among the masses, since it was not cheap and its application involved cumbersome processes and the use of specially prepared apparatus. The state of affairs was in the doldrums and there was no way out. It was a matter of regret that the difference of opinion between Dr. Mehta and the rest of the Trustees on some fundamental issues led to the cessation of the former's services to the Clinic. The burden of the Ashram, therefore, was entrusted to Shri Balkoba Bhave and Dr. Appasaheb Bhagvat. After taking stock of the situation afresh, it was decided that under the supervision of Shri Balkoba the Clinic should evolve a nature-cure technique which could be practicable and popular in the rural areas from the experiments made by Dr. Bhagvat, which were cheap, simple and facile. It is not unreasonable to hope that this difficult project will be accomplished by the joint labours of Shri Balkoba, who thoroughly understands Gandhiji's conception of a Nature-Cure Clinic and his self-dedicated colleague Dr. Bhagvat.

This is possible only if a greater number of poor patients take benefit of this Institute. In order to make it possible for them to do so, the following two rules have been framed and brought into operation from 1st January '50 for all new patients desiring to receive its treatment :

1. A patient will be charged only the actual expenses of his board and the cost of fuel and water to be used for his treatment. The mess charges will come to about Rs. 2 per day. Every effort will be made to economize expenses.
2. Whatever the patient affords to give willingly will be accepted as Treatment Fees.

We hope that the public will take advantage of these new facilities. Persons, desiring to be enlisted as Nature-Cure patients should immediately send their applications with a two-anna postal stamp to the undersigned.

MANIBHAI DESAI
Manager

Nature-Cure Clinic,
Urulikanchan (Dist. Poona)

EDUCATION FOR PEACE

[The following report was submitted by Mr. Wilfred Wellock on behalf of Commission "B" of the World Pacifist Meeting, during its Sevagram sittings.

It must be noted that the phrase "Basic Education" has been rather loosely used in the report. The principle underlying it in its general application, has been called by Gandhiji *Nai Talim* (New Education). Basic Education is technically used in India for *Nai Talim* during the period of a pupil's primary and secondary training, roughly from the age of 7 to 14. — Editor.]

I

Key to World Peace

The doctrine of faith which is called Pacifism in the West and non-violence in the East, like all other vital doctrines, must needs change its content and implications, and thus its ends and means from time to time.

In the West during the last 40 years Pacifism has passed from a policy of war resistance, pure and simple, to one which calls for far-reaching social and economic reconstruction, the abandonment of Imperialism, Racial discrimination and Capitalism. In recent years, both in the West and the East, Non-violence has begun to demand far more fundamental changes still, changes which affect the roots of social life everywhere, its culture, content and aims.

To-day the world is in chaos. Its material part is almost completely divorced from its spiritual parts. The material, which knows no moral law, has become a law unto itself. If, therefore, the physical world is to be stabilized and saved from self-destruction, it must become part of a unified world order. It must, that is to say, be brought under the control of moral and spiritual law.

In the East spiritual traditions have not been broken down to the same extent as in the West, although in fact spiritual values exercise little influence indeed upon economic life, whereas in the West, chief emphasis is placed unashamed upon high standards of material living. Hence in both hemispheres, there is an almost complete failure to synthesize the spiritual and the material. To achieve this synthesis is the outstanding need of our time.

By one means or another the things of the flesh must be brought into proper relationship with the things of the spirit. Only thus will they be able to make their fitting contribution to life as a whole, to the well-being of human persons, of society, and to the peace of the world.

This relationship can best be established in the sphere of education, where conduct can be determined in relation to human needs. Education is fundamentally a process of life-building, of training in the art of living. It is the art of putting all things in their right order so that every function, interest or activity which has a contribution to make to the good life, may find its appropriate place in the scheme of life as a whole. We are thus brought to the vital principles involved in what Mahatma Gandhi called Basic Education or Education for Living. In the exercise of all man's powers in purposive, social living, which is essentially co-operative living, Gandhi discovered a unifying principle by which the human person might become a whole man, who must be the foundation of integrated families, integrated communities, and of a peaceful world.

Work is man's basic activity, the means by which all his material needs are satisfied. It is also the major means of exercising and developing all his powers and of enabling him to experience the joys of self and social fulfilment. The moment a person handles any raw material with the object of giving it a serviceable function in the life around him, he becomes a creator and develops an inward strength and a self-reliance which spur him on to greater fulfilment.

Here then we have a life principle of high value. To make something in the external world correspond to something in the spirit is to add beauty and value to life and quality to human personality. This order of labour exercises all man's mental and spiritual powers to the utmost and so calls for their renewal. This renewal is achieved in rest, in sleep, in meditation, in religious devotion and artistic appreciation and enjoyment in all its forms.

Accordingly in the Indian *ashrams* where Gandhiji's Basic Education is now being practised, periods of silence for meditation come as naturally as sleep and waking, while silent or meditative spinning, in addition to this, symbolizes the sacredness of every common task. In this latter act we have found the same principle at work which during the Middle Ages in the West was expressed in the words: "To labour is to Pray".

The major evils of our time, including deepening ideological conflicts and total war, are the direct off-spring of failure to connect work with religion and art. The result is the atomization of the human person, the disintegration of the home and the community, and a complex of vicious International relations.

The primary cause of this failure is the materialism which has led to the exploitation of the masses both in the highly industrialized West and in the tradition-bound East during several centuries. In both cases exploitation has led to the dehumanization of the masses in the West by repetitive labour and in the East by appalling poverty.

It is customary for those who defend the highly mechanized life of the West to argue that machinery paves the way to a short working day and an ample leisure in which man may develop his creative powers.

This, however, is a delusion. In a mass production society with its inevitable repetitive processes, man can only work for money. He thus becomes a materialist, who expects to buy with hard cash all his pleasures and reliefs. From this fact comes the multiplication of appetites and wants in every direction, to which there is no end. To satisfy this growing demand

for goods and services, consumes the promised leisure of the false prophets of a materialistic society.

Furthermore, this expansion of material demands which we now know as "Standards of Living", becomes the dominant factor in home and foreign policy in every country where a money economy operates. It thus leads directly to a situation wherein, commodity after commodity (as for example food), supply is unable to keep pace with the demand. Hence competition for the earth's resources leads inevitably to Imperialism, ideological conflicts and world wars. Despite all our technical and scientific advance, therefore, in every generation there emerge the haves and the have-nots and the consequent demand for bigger and bigger expenditures on militarism. This also prevents the enlargement of leisure.

We thus make the discovery that the key to world peace lies in the development of an economy which by its nature is peaceful, produces none of the stresses which lead to war. Such an economy is the purpose of Basic Education, the essence of which is creative co-operative living, in every country.

The significance of this discovery cannot be too strongly emphasized. It changes the nature of every human and social function and gives rise to an economy which is related to the needs of the whole man and the whole of humanity.

Expressed in international terms, this means that the acceptance of Basic Education would cause the demands which nations make upon the world's resources to be modified by basic concepts of man's ends and needs. At one stroke, therefore, the major causes of friction in the modern world can be removed by the practice of Basic Education and all that it involves.

In these circumstances, it is possible to face the world's political and economic problems with a new hope. About the nature of the organizations that would be required to perform the functions necessary to the smooth working of International relations we need not here be concerned, since these can easily be determined once the field has been cleared of its major tensions.

So long as the aim of nations is ever-rising standards of material living, there can be little hope for anything in the nature of World Government, since in a materialistic society those countries with high standards of living, will not cease to plan and strive to maintain and even raise their standards, notwithstanding that by so doing they will stimulate revolt and ideological upheavals in other parts of the world, which in turn will cause them to devote larger and larger percentages of their national income to militarism and to the buttressing of collapsing national economics, as is happening in our time. In such circumstances World Government will continue to evade the more vital issues in world affairs. Not until the stresses caused by this canker of materialism have been removed will effective co-operation at the world level become a practical policy. The end and means of Basic Education are the Gandhian remedy for this materialism and its consequences.

SOME REMARKS ABOUT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

While I was in India as a delegate to the World Pacifist Meeting, I was a little surprised to find that Gandhi's country still maintains capital punishment. When I talked about it with several Indians, among them some in a very high position, I found that the real essence of this question is not generally known. Coming from a country (Germany) which is known for being very violent, but where capital punishment has been abolished (1948 in the Russian Zone, 1949 in the Western Zones), I should like to put before Indians some reasons why I think capital punishment should go.

I shall not insist on the fact that errors are possible, and that in every country where capital punishment exists now and then there happens a case when an innocent man is executed. Some people say that we have to run that risk, since the danger from murderers is too terrible, and a strong deterrent must be maintained.

But is capital punishment such a deterrent? All the evidence shows that it is not.

In those countries where capital punishment has been abolished, no subsequent increase of the murder rate has ever been experienced. The murder rate goes slowly down since a century; the abolishment of the death penalty has neither increased nor stopped this steady decline. In the U.S.A. some States have abolished the death penalty, others maintain it. The murder rate however is highest in the big cities like New York and Chicago, where capital punishment still exists.

In about 1800 a discussion took place in the House of Commons, London, when the death penalty for pocket thieves was sought to be abolished. It had been the practice till then of hanging the culprit in a public place. One M. P. pleaded that, if this was abolished, the end of human civilization and especially of private property had come. But the Police presented a statement, that on no occasion more stealing was practised than during the public execution of a pocket thief! At the very moment when they can see what consequence their activities may have, they steal — because the opportunity is so prosperous, owing to the general excitement of the public. So where is here the deterrent?

When the death penalty was abolished in Germany last June, the last executioner just happened to be in jail. He had committed a heavy crime. That man at least knew what an

execution means, he had cut off some heads himself. Was he deterred? He was brutalized!

The only effective deterrent is a good police. What deters a man from committing a crime is the probability of being caught. When a man is sure he will be sent to jail for 10 years, he will never commit a crime. You need no death for that.

But there is one further argument, which I think to be decisive. You all know such people as are used to eat meat but say that they "of course" were not capable of killing with their own hands the animal they eat. If they would have to do that, they would rather become vegetarians. But they have others doing it for them, others — whom they often condemn for the bloody work they are doing.

You all, who are in favour of the death penalty, are you willing to execute a murderer with your own hands? Oh no, certainly not, you are so non-violent, you never would kill a man! But you oblige others to do so on your behalf!

What would you say if your daughter one day would tell you that she is going to marry a man whose profession it is to kill other men? Would you like it? Oh no, you look down on such a professional killer — and forget that the man is acting on your service.

As long as there is capital punishment, there must be an executioner, a man whose job it is deliberately to kill other men. The law makes a distinction between a man who kills in a certain fit of passion and a man who kills in cold blood and deliberately. This latter crime is considered to be the worst of all. But our society obliges a man to commit it professionally.

Wasn't it Gandhi who said that no good aims could ever be attained by evil means? Deliberately killing men, that seems to me to be a rather evil means. A well organized human society does not need to be protected by such means. But if human society cannot be protected by other means than by paying a professional killer, then I think such a society is not worthy of being protected at all.

HEINZ KRASCHUTZKI (Berlin)

* * *

[Note: I wonder if it is really necessary to argue at length the case for abolition. It is not want of conviction that is in the way, but of will and courage to take the step. The Congressmen in Government were convinced that capital punishment must go in free India as far back as 1931; but then there was no power! And power is a damper and is generally afraid to pursue moral principles. U.S.A. is so powerful that it is terribly afraid of its safe existence without equally powerful bombs! And Great Britain is afraid of demolishing its gallows. No wonder, if India, which follows them, cannot anticipate them. —K. G. M.]

TOTAL PROHIBITION

The State of Bombay has, by the Bombay Prohibition Act of 1949, penalized the manufacture, sale, bottling, consumption or use, or keeping of still and other equipments for the manufacture of liquor finally from 31st March, 1950.

Clamorous outcries against total prohibition have been frequently raised by certain papers, business magnates and their associations. They do not deny the social and moral value of prohibition, and its need in the interest of the people. But they counsel that the province must go slow towards it; because of the great loss of revenue to the State (Rs. 14 crores annually in Bombay), insufficiency of public opinion in its favour to make the implementation reasonably easy, the honoured place of wines in 'civilized' countries and 'high class' circles and its 'absolute necessity' in certain callings (e.g., the army). They feel that the zeal of a small section of puritans, in power for the time being, must not be allowed to make finance its victim.

I believe that the social and moral value of prohibition is a factor which should be considered decisive in the matter, against all other considerations.

The case for prohibition is based on ruined health, unhappy homes, uncared for wives, children and domestic affairs, lost wages, street brawls, murders and other crimes, and suicides. Prohibition is thus not a mere puritan creed, but stands on its own positive and concrete merits. Though the reform will also need constructive steps to wean away addicts, it cannot be allowed to rest on mere persuasion and preaching. The temptation must be removed from the way to reinforce persuasion, and no Government for the people can ignore it.

Sobriety multiplies man-power manifold. Those who bewail the loss of revenue of 14 crores of rupees are unmindful of the fact that the money is not lost but remains with the reclaimed drink-addict, more often than not a needy person, and enables him to purchase better needs and enjoy happier home-life.

Also, vice cannot be eradicated by instalments. This method has been tried in the case of prohibition and failed, at a cost of several crores of rupees spent unprofitably. The vice must be eliminated all at once and in toto and the Bombay Government has taken the right step in not departing from its policy of total prohibition throughout the province.

Commending, soliciting the use of, or offering any intoxicant and to be found drunk or drinking in a common drinking house or to be present there for the purpose of drinking has been made a penal offence in the Province of Bombay, including the merged areas, from June 16, 1949, on which date the Bombay Prohibition Act came into force. But some concessions and exceptions were allowed under it till now. These will stand repealed from 31st March, 1950. Now

that the law is well laid, any relaxation will be but recession, which will undermine public confidence in the consistency of the State's Acts and policies.

Madhuli, Bombay 7 SARABHAI PRATAPRAI

Scientific Terms

An English-Gujarati Glossary of Scientific Terms in Nagari Script * (2nd edition, price Rs. 6) compiled by Shri P. G. Shah and published jointly, by the Gujarat Research Society and the Forbes Gujarati Sabha, Bombay, deserves careful notice of educationists and students of Indian languages, including the Common Language Hindi.

It will remain for some years a debatable issue as to whether there should be a common terminology throughout India for all scientific and technical words, or whether different regional languages may select or coin wherever convenient or needed such words as would fit in with themselves or appeal to the immediately concerned masses. It will also be keenly debated for some years to what extent international and foreign words should be retained or adopted in our languages. Shri P. G. Shah has given both in Gujarati and English detailed working rules followed by him in compiling the Glossary. It would take too much space to reproduce them in full; but he has accepted in this regard as guiding principles the opinions of Gandhiji, Dr. Rajendraprasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Shri Kaka Kalelkar, Prof. J. B. S. Haldane and others of non-boycott of foreign words as such, acceptance of international words, avoidance of pedantry in the formation of new words etc.

When one examines specific words of such compilations, it is always possible to pick up some words which sound strange and clumsy, too difficult, too pedantic, or too simple to make an appearance of respectability. Every such glossary can be ridiculed by a jesting critic. It may not be impossible to find a few samples of such from this glossary also. But this is not the proper way of assessing such works. The better way would be to mark out words which are good and acceptable. If so examined every compilation by a diligent and competent scholar might be found to contain words, a majority of which are common to all those who accept similar working rules, and a few such as would be regarded as particularly happy formations. The difference of opinion would dwindle down to a few, except where the basic principles are altogether different.

I hope this glossary will be found useful by educationists and writers on technical subjects. It purports to provide words for 25 branches of Physical and Social sciences, and I believe, has about 9,000 entries. Its utility has been enhanced by publishing it in the Nagari script.

Bombay, 15-2-'50 K. G. M.

* The book is available at the Navajivan Publishing House, Post Box 105, Ahmedabad.

ASHRAM ACTIVITIES

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I

Worship

(iii)

Prarthana (Gujarati word for prayer) literally means to ask for something, that is, to ask God or elders for something in a spirit of humility. Here the word *prarthana* is not used in that sense, but in the sense of praising or worshipping God, meditation and self-purification.

But who is God? God is not some person outside our body or away from the universe. He pervades everything, and is omniscient as well as omnipotent. He does not need any praise or petitions. Being all-pervasive He bears everything and reads our innermost thoughts. He abides in our hearts and is nearer to us than the nails are to the fingers. What is the use of telling Him anything?

It is in view of this difficulty that *prarthana* is further paraphrased as self-purification. When we speak out aloud at prayer time, our speech is addressed not to God but to ourselves, and is intended to shake off our torpor. Some of us are intellectually aware of God, while others are afflicted by doubt. None has seen Him face to face. We desire to recognize and realize Him, to become one with Him, and seek to gratify that desire through prayer.

This God whom we seek to realize is Truth. Or to put it in another way Truth is God. This Truth is not merely the truth we are expected to speak. It is That which alone is, which constitutes the stuff of which all things are made, which subsists by virtue of its own power, which is not supported by anything else but supports everything that exists. Truth alone is eternal, everything else is momentary. It does not need any shape or form. It is pure intelligence as well as pure bliss. We call It *Ishvara* because everything is regulated by Its will. It and the law It promulgates are one. Therefore it is not a blind law. This law governs the entire universe. To propitiate this Truth is *prarthana* which boils down into an earnest desire to be filled with the spirit of Truth. This desire should be present all the twenty-four hours. But our souls are too dull to have this awareness day and night. Therefore we offer prayers for a short time in the hope that a time will come when all our conduct will be one continuously sustained prayer.

Such is the ideal of prayer for the Ashram, which at present is far, far away from it. The detailed programme outlined above is something external, but the idea is to make our very hearts prayerful. If the Ashram prayers are not still attractive, if even the inmates of the Ashram attend them under compulsion of a sort, it only means that none of us is still a man of prayer in the real sense of the term.

In heartfelt prayer the worshipper's attention is concentrated on the object of worship so

much so that he is not conscious of anything else besides. The worshipper has well been compared to a lover. The lover forgets the whole world and even himself in the presence of the beloved. The identification of the worshipper with God should be closer still. It comes only after much striving, self-suffering (*tapas*) and self-discipline. In a place which such a worshipper sanctifies by his presence, no inducements need to be offered to people for attending prayers, as they are drawn to the house of prayer by the force of his devotion.

We have dealt so far with congregational prayer, but great stress is also laid in the Ashram on individual and solitary prayer. One who never prays by himself may attend congregational prayers but will not derive much advantage from them. Congregational prayers are absolutely necessary for a congregation, but as a congregation is made up of individuals, congregational prayers are fruitless without individual prayers. Every member of the Ashram is therefore reminded now and then that he should give himself up to self-introspection of his own accord at all times of the day. No watch can be kept that he does this, and no account can be maintained of such silent prayer. I cannot say how far it prevails in the Ashram, but I believe that some are making more or less effort in that direction.

(*To be continued*)

(Translated from Gujarati by V. G. D.)

NAMES OF INSTITUTIONS

The Prime Minister recently disapproved the practice of naming institutions and public places after leaders, who were still active in life. Shri M. S. Aney, the Governor of Bihar, had once similarly expressed his disapprobation of the growing practice of changing old names and giving new ones to them. Both are wholesome injunctions. Public opinion is so ephemeral that one does not know when a leader will fall low in the eyes of his admirers. The phenomena of leaders, who were once almost deified being later hated, stoned and put to death, are not unknown. Take for instance the Jinnah Hall of the Bombay Congress. Is it conceivable that that Hall could have received his name in a Congress institution, if it had been built after 1921 ? It is, therefore, best to pay posthumous homage to them, as far as permanent memorials are concerned.

But once an institution has been named after an individual, it is bad again to give it the name of another more popular individual. On the one hand, man takes infinite pains and government and public institutions spend large sums for preserving and rediscovering history ; on the other hand, he deliberately proceeds to destroy and mutilate its evidences. Names like Girgaum, Pydhoni, Boribunder, are indicative of the past of Bombay. To obliterate them is to destroy its visible records. To rename Victoria Gardens as Kasturba Gardens is not only ungraceful and mutilation of history, but also a lazy and cheap way of paying homage to the worshipful personality of Kasturba. It means that the Bombay City Fathers finding that they cannot create anything great and new to commemorate her, to discharge what they conceive to be their obligations to Kasturba, deprive another eminent lady, who was also their Queen-Empress according to indisputable history and personally held in great respect by all people. Two and a half years ago they would not have dared to make such a suggestion. In my humble opinion, institutions bearing names of even unpopular persons must not be disturbed. It is mutilation of truth and has an element of bad grace, which is violence.

Bombay, 9-2-'50 K. G. MASHRUWALA

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